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EAST TIMOR CNRM TIMOR LORO SAE

National Council of Maubere Resistance

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EAST TIMOR
MEDIA RELEASE

JAKARTA RUSSIAN EMBASSY EAST TIMORESE AND INDONESIAN SUPPORTERS DISAPPEAR-ABDUCTED BY POLICE

On 7 December, the 20th anniversary of Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, 113 East Timorese and Indonesian youths entered the Dutch and Russian Embassies in Jakarta, to protest against the illegal occupation of East Timor. They demanded a serious discussion with Indonesian authorities regarding the demilitarisation of the territory, an end to human rights violations, and respect for the East Timorese people's right of self determination. Indonesia responded by inciting a group of (mostly East Indonesian) thugs, posing as East Timorese, to trespass into the Dutch Embassy in violation of most basic diplomatic conventions, and attack the protesters, staff members (including the ambassador), and cause material damage. The 55 (29 Indonesian, 26 East Timorese) protesters remain in the embassy, adequately cared for.

The 58 youths who entered the Russian Embassy (48 East Timorese, 10 Indonesians), and were initially promised protection, came under strong pressure from the embassy staff to leave. Outside the fence, a group of thugs kept on shouting abuse at the youths during the day. Well-known Indonesian Human Rights lawyer H.J.C. Princen was called in to negotiate with the youths in the embassy, and an agreement was reached on 8 December, that they would leave for the Indonesian legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI) not too far away, after Princen obtained promises from the Indonesian military that the youths' security would be guaranteed.

At 18.00 hrs on 8 December, a hired bus arrived at the Russian Embassy to pick up the East Timorese and Indonesians. Police did not allow the bus to enter the grounds, so the youths had to pass the group of pro-Indonesian thugs outside, who abused them, made obscene gestures and spat at them, pounding their bus. As soon as the group had left the Embassy and boarded the bus which was supposed to take them to the YLBHI, five police armed with clubs, insisted to board it as well, despite the protests of Prinsen and PRD leader Dita Sari that this was contrary to the agreement. The bus then left for YLBHI, with Princen and Dita Sari leading the way in separate vehicles.

The bus never reached YLBHI. It was hijacked by the police on board. The bus, and its East Timorese and Indonesian passengers have since disappeared. They are suspected to be at Indonesian military intelligence headquarters in Jakarta, but this has not been confirmed at the time of writing (some 30 hours after being last seen). H.J.C. Princen has publicly denounced the deception and breach of agreement by the Indonesian military.

CNRM deplores this dishonourable act by the Indonesian military. It once again shows the duplicity and lack of credibility of the Suharto regime authorities, which is a basic reason for the lack of proper resolution of the East Timor issue. CNRM calls for appropriate action to protect the well being of the East Timorese and Indonesian youths so crudely abducted by Indonesian authorities. Based on past experience, there is all reason to assume that they are exposed to severe mistreatment.END.

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